

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 EB-11 COME-00 AGR-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 TAR-02

NEA-14 CIEP-02 SCS-03 DRC-01 /154 W

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R 201600Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3851

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS EFIN GR

SUBJ: ANDROUTSOPOULOS PRAISED IN MEAT TRIAL - POSSIBLE
WHITEWASH

REF ATHENS 2991

1. ONE OF MAIN DEFENDANTS IN MEAT TRIAL, FORMER DIRECTOR
GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF COMMERCE Z. PAPAMICHALOPOULOS SINGLED
OUT PRIME MINISTER ANDROUTSOPOULOS WHO AS FORMER MINISTER OF
FINANCE DURING PAPADOPOULOS REGIME WAS ONLY CABINET MINISTER
WHO DID NOT BEND LAWS AND REGULATIONS. PAPAMICHALOPOULOS
WHO PLEADED GUILTY BEFORE MILITARY TRIBUNAL TO CHARGES OF
BRIBERY AND FRAUD IN CONNECTION WITH ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF
MEAT, SAID IN HIS DEFENSE STATEMENT PUBLISHED IN ATHENS NEWS
AND IN DILUTED FORM IN TO VIMA THAT "GEORGE PAPADOPOULOS
HIMSELF KEPT ADVISING HIS PRINCIPAL COLLABORATORS TO BREAK
THE LAW, WHENEVER THAT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE JOBS
ASSIGNED TO THEM TO BE DONE. THE ONLY CABINET MINISTER
WHO WAS FOR BOTH THE SUBSTANCE AND THE LETTER OF THE
LAW TO BE RESPECTED WAS THE PRESENT PRIME MINISTER
ADAMANTIOS ANDROUTSOPOULOS." PAPAMICHALOPOULOS ALSO SAID
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CO-DEFENDANT EX-UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE MICHAEL

BALOPOULOS WAS NOT INVOLVED IN BRIBERY NOR AWARE OF ILLEGAL TRANSACTIONS. BALOPOULOS HAS PLEADED NOT GUILTY. TRIAL MOVES TO FINAL STAGES THIS WEEK WITH PUBLIC PROSECUTOR SUMMING UP CHARGES AND RECOMMENDING SENTENCING OF ACCUSED.

2. COMMENT: WHILE PAPAMICHALOPOULOS MAY CALCULATE THAT PRAISE OF PM ANDROUTSOPOULOS MAY BE HELPFUL TO PAPAMICHALOPOULOS IN TRIBUNAL'S DELIBERATIONS OF PUNISHMENT, HIS ACCUSATION OF WRONGDOING OF MEMBERS OF PAPADOPOULOS GOVERNMENT AND OF EX-PRESIDENT PAPADOPOULOS HIMSELF WILL HAVE ITS EFFECT. RUMORS OF CORRUPTION CHARGES INVOLVING EX-PRESIDENT PAPADOPOULOS AND DEPUTY PMS (PATTAKOS HAS OFFERED REPORTEDLY TO TESTIFY IF CALLED) AND OTHER MINISTERS OF EARLIER CABINETS CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE, BUT PAPAMICHALOPOULOS' STATEMENT REPRESENTS FIRST PUBLIC CHARGE BY EX-OFFICIAL AND PLACES PM ANDROUTSOPOULOS OUTSIDE CIRCLE OF ACCUSED. PAPAMICHALOPOULOS' STATEMENT ABOUT FORMER OFFICIALS AGAIN RAISES DELICATE ISSUE CONFRONTING GOG ON EXTENT TO WHICH IT SHOULD PURSUE CORRUPTION ACCUSATIONS RE MEAT, REAL ESTATE, FALSE LICENSING, ETC. INVOLVING PAPADOPOULOS MINISTERS. LOCAL OBSERVERS OPINE THAT CHARGES AGAINST BALOPOULOS AND OTHER RETIRED MILITARY ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN MEAT IMPORTS SCANDAL MAY BE DROPPED IN EFFORT TO PRESERVE INTEGRITY OF MILITARY. BRUNT OF RESPONSIBILITY WOULD HENCE FALL ON CIVIL SERVANTS SUCH AS PAPAMICHALOPOULOS AND PRIVATE IMPORTERS. SUCH OUTCOME IN MEANT TRIAL MAY NOT SATISFY THOSE MILITARY OFFICERS WHO REPORTEDLY DEMANDED UNBIASED INVESTIGATION AND SENTENCING WHEN APPROPRIATE OF ALL OFFICIALS INCLUDING ANY MILITARY OFFICERS IMPLICATED IN SCANDAL. PUBLIC OUTRAGE IF THERE IS A WHITEWASH CAN BE ASSUMED. TASCA

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